AN APOLOGETICALL DECLARATION

Of the Conscientious *Presbyterians* of the Province of LONDON, and of many thousand other faithfull, and Covenant-keeping Citizens, and Inhabitants within the laid City and Suburbs thereof.

Wherein their firmenesse and faithfulnesse to their first Principles, and to their solemne *League and Covenant* is Conscientiously cleared, and the contrary Aspersions cast upon them, is disclaimed and abhorred before God and the Whole World.

Iune the 22th. 1649.

Ezek. 17. 15. 18. 19.

Shall they prosper, shall they escape, that do such things? or shall they break the Covenant, and be delivered?

Seeing they have despised the Oath, by breaking the Covenant (whereas, lo, they had given their hand) and have done all these things.

Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, As I live, surely, mine Oath which they have despised, and my Covenant which they have broken, even it will I recompense upon their own heads.

Job, 22, 30.

The innocent shall deliver the Iland, and it shall be preserved by the pureness of thy hands.

LONDON: Printed in the Year, 1649.

To the Reader.

COurteous Reader, It is prudentially conſidered and concluded on by the *Subſcribers* hereof, that (ſeeing their reverent *Miniſters Repreſentation*, with ſubſcription of their Names hath not taken that happie effect which was deſired, nor ſtayed the hands of thoſe to whom it was directed) therefore the publiſhing of their names that have ſubſcribed to this *Apologeticall Declaration*, will in like manner, do but little good, in that reſpect; And, therefore, although they are upon record to the honour of the *Goſpel* they are not, now, publiſhed, in regard of the preſent over-awing Power of the Sword; but may and ſhall in due time appear in publick with more ample and (we hope) moſt ſatisfactory Demonſtration of the juſt Reaſons of this their preſent concealment. *Vale.*

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November 1, 1932

WE the Subscribers of this our Apologeticall Declaration, who desire to approve our selves sincere Professors of the true Reformed Protestant Religion, Presbyterian Citizens and Inhabitants of the honourable, and, lately, famous and renowned City of *London*, who have cordially adhered unto the Parliament, in its first and second War against the Kings Forces, for the defence of the true Protestant Religion, His Majesties Person, Crown and Dignity, the Rights and Priviledges of both Houses of Parliament, and, in them, the Lawes and Liberties of the Kingdome: Calling to minde our solemne engagements, not only by our Protestation, *May*, 5th, 1641. but especially our solemne League and Covenant, which was so religiously and unanimously sworn unto, *with our hands lifted up to the high and holy God of Heaven, that we would really, sincerely and constantly, through the grace of God, in our severall Callings, and with our lives and estates, endevour the preservation of them all*; Artic. 1. 2, 3. &c. And, being in our Consciences perswaded and assured of our indispensible obligation so to do, because most deeply engaged by our said Covenant, *not to suffer our selves directly or indirectly, by whatsoever combination, perswasion, or terror, to be divided or withdrawn from that Cause which so much concerneth the glory of God, the good of the Kingdome, and honour of the King: But, all the dayes of our lives zealously and constantly to continue therein against all opposition.* Artic. 6. And, Whereas, by wofull experience, we are made very sensible of the dangerous effects of the violation of all our Covenant-concernments, and of the disappointment of our hopes of reaping the expected fruits of this defensive war, for which, we the Subscribers, have, many of us, adventured our lives, and most of us, our estates, in a measure, beyond our abilities, besides the Common Taxes that have been imposed upon us. And, though wee cannot but with bleeding and trembling hearts complain that our Cause doth in these sad and perillous times in which we live, meet with such violent Opposition, such mighty Lets and Impediments as we are not able to suppresse and overcome, yet, considering with our selves, that what we cannot suppresse or overcome, we are obliged to reveal and make known. *Artic.* 6. Being also moved with fear, lest in this time of imminent danger to all that is dear unto us, our Silence should be taken for Consent; and so contract upon our selves the guilt of betraying Religion, King, Parliament, the Lawes and Liberties of this Nation; having also no other way left us to set our Consciences at liberty from the aforesaid guilt, we might contract by our sinfull silence, in this juncture of time. We do, therefore, with all sincerity, fidelity, zeal, and humility, before the most just and righteous Lord of Heaven and earth, make known unto all the three Kingdomes of *England*, *Scotland* and *Ireland*, to all the Reformed Churches, and unto the whole Christian World, not onely the dis-satisfaction of our Spirits, at the late and present

Transactions of those who have reduced, and now the Supreme power unto their own hands. But also do make this our following most solemne and [illegible] for our clearing and justification from allowing or adhering to the illegall actings of these present times. And that we may also publish unto the world the grounds of these our most just exceptions and necessitated complaints herein, we declare, That, not only in generall, our righteous Cause before mentioned is perverted, deserted, apostatized, and fallen from; by those who most injuriously and falsly reproach us with Apostacie for not associating with them, and bearing them company in their unwarrantable wayes; But, also, in particular, that it is perverted, and abused in every part and branch thereof. As first, in point of our Religion, which we are most deeply engaged by Covenant to preserve and reforme in power and purity; Whereas in our own experience (confirmed by the Parliaments first Remonstrance; Exact Collect: *pag.* 4.) Religion, in its purity was greatly endangered, in the Prelates times in the Doctrinall part, by the errors of *Popery* and *Arminianisme*; and in worship, with superstitious Innovations. And, in our sad apprehension, the Doctrine of the Gospell is, now adayes, not onely more endangered through the increase of *Popery* and *Arminianisme*, but of most blasphemous *Antiscripturisme*, *Antitrinitarianisme*, *Anticovenantisme*, *Seekinisme*, and many other such like heterodox opinions, and damnable Doctrines: But also in point of worship, which, instead of feare of corruptings, is, now, in great danger of absolute Nulling, by accursed opinions both against the very being of Ordinances, the set-times and dayes appointed by God for their Administration, and even of the Officers and Ministers appointed by Jesus Christ, for their dispensation. Which doth the more sadly affect our hearts, and inforce this just Declaration and complaint, because of that so eagerly endeavoured unwarrantable Tolerating of them all (except, in that shameli exception of theirs, of the open practise of Popery and Prelacie) as if it were that Liberty of Conscience which we have all this while engaged for; But, rather, against which, We doe not onely protest, but contrariwise professe and declare that it was onely a Liberty of Conscience from sin and error, which was propounded in our Freedome from our former Egyptian Taskmasters the Prelates.

In the next place, we further declare against the perverting of our Cause, in relation to the preservation of the Rights and Priviledges of Parliament. For, although we were not able to preserve and defend them, when violated by that unpattern'd and horrid force upon the House, *Decemb.* 6 and 7, 1648. Yet we conceive our selves obliged to Declare against it, and against the imprisoning and secluding so many of the faithfullest *Patriots* and assertors of the publick interest of the Kingdome; And also against the most insolent subversion and alteration of the constitution of the Supreme judicatorie of the Kingdome, consisting of the Kings Personall or Virtuall Presence, Lords and Commons, without whom (as we have been alwayes taught and informed) no Law can be enacted or repealed; The confirmation and inviolable settlement of which happie Nationall constitution, with its preservation, were the grounds of our Engagements and no change or alteration of the same. Whereas, now, to the unexpressible grief of our Soules, we see a most strong & fierce combination in the [illegible] Hall

nerall and Armies Counsell of Warre, and others of their partie (set forth to the view of us all, in that Modell of theirs, called, *The Agreement of the People*, and presented to that which they call the Parliament, *January*, 20th, 1648.) utterly to subvert and overthrow the whole frame of our foresaid Legall Government, and to introduce and enforce upon us a most uncouth, strange, and headlesse confused Arbitrary and tyrannicall Government of their own devising, and by a new as headlesse Representative of their own compacting; and yet all this while, (even whiles they are most violently endeavouring to overthrow all our Nationall Fundamentall Government, the very traiterous act for which the Earle of *Straford* and *Canterbury* dyed, and which they now lay to the Kings charge to destroy him) most fallaciously and hypocritically they protest, and [illegible] perswade us (as, in pag. 29. of their foresaid, *Agreement of the* [illegible] *that they are farre from any desire or thought, to assum or exercise* [illegible] (these are their own words) *or judiciall power over the King* [illegible], *or to meddle in any thing, save the fundamentall settling of that power in the most equall or hopefull way* (as they pretend) *for common Right and Safety; and this, they say, they humbly tender to us, to consider, and accept of, if we please*; Whereas, alas, we know, and *ancient experience hath taught us to know, that a Tyrants or Conquerors, Pray, is an irresistible Command*; And this also is it, we thus justly complain of and declare against.

But, in the third place, in relation to our Engagement by the Sword, and Covenant to defend and preserve our Liberties and Freedoms (in this our late, most famous and honourable City of *London*) according to Law; we are most heartily sorie for the too just occasion that we have to publish, and reveal the most evident Perversion of our Cause under this consideration also. For, whereas, to enjoy a Propriety in our estates, with a Freedome from Patentes, Monopolies, Ship-money, and other illegall Impositions and Taxes, the Liberty of our Persons from unlawfull Arrests and Imprisonments, contrary unto Magna Charta, our freeborn English Spirits were raised (for their Preservation and defence) most freely and even prodigally to lay out our persons and purses: We are, now, not onely in danger of intolerable slavery instead of Freedom and liberty, according to Law; But, to have our Franchises and Priviledges, as Freemen of this City voted and rent from us. The deep wounding thoughts whereof do so affect and peirce our hearts, that we cannot any longer forbear mournfully to complain, and Declare, That, since the 7th of *December* last, we are not onely deprived of our Freedome and liberty to make choice of such Common Counsell-men, who have all along approved themselves, to God, the Parliament, and City, men faithfull in their trust; they being, now, made uncapable of being chosen thereunto, because of their honest Activity for the Personall Treaty; And that, by an Ordinance made after this supposed crime was acted. And now, as a sad fruit of it, through many Common-Counsell-men most illegally and forcibly chosen, in part of a Common-Counsell, is passed a Petition, which at best, shews the framers and promoters thereof, onely to minde Earthly things, not a word of any Religious

Heavenly concernment, being once mentioned in it; And it is intituled or

led, *The petition of the Commons of the City of London*: Which is not only a foule injurie and blemish unto the truly religious and cordiall Commons thereof; but fills us also with fear of future sore breaches of our Franchises, and City-liberties, if not to the totall subversion of the whole Frame of the well-constituted and long experienced good Government of one of the most glorious and renowned Cities in the Christian world. All which most injurious irregularities we cannot chose, as Citizens, but with ineffable greif of heart, here, Declare and complain of, being in conscience obliged hereunto, even by the Oath of Freemen; viz: *The Franchises and customes of this City you shall maintain.* So that, whereas, we fought for the defence of our Liberties by Law, that our English Spirits might not be intimidated or beslaved by the Kings designe of bringing in of Germane-horse: We are, now, so farre from seeing any sure Foundations, for our Liberties and Freedome, according to Law, that we look upon our selves in exceeding great danger (upon that Common plea of the Army, Necessity) to be miserably subjected to Martiall Law, instead of being ruled by the Municipall-Law of the Kingdom.

And yet, as if nothing should be wanting to make us completely miserable and exquisitely to pervert our Cause throughout; When both King and Parliament were in an hopfull way not onely of being reconciled, but of settling the Kingdome in a way that would have answered, (in some competent measure, for the present) the expense of our blood and treasure, and our Covenant-engagement also; we are now not, onely disappointed in our hopes thereof: But, his Majesties Royall Person (the defence and preservation whereof, though so carefully provided for, by the many Declarations of the Parliament, the frequent Proclamations in our streets by the beat of the Drum, at the beginning of these Wars, by our Protestation *May* 5th, 1641, and by our Solemn League and Covenant; yet as if the end of our engaging with the Parliament had been for the ruine of the Kings person and regall Authority) His Majesties Person, we say, is not onely in extreme danger, by being exposed unto a Tryall without warrant either from the Word of God, or the Laws of the Land: But also is thereby plunged into such a nature and condition, as is altogether derogatorie to and inconsistent with the Kings Honour, which we professe in our Covenant, is the 3d part of our Cause, for which we engaged. *Artic.* 6 That the world, therefore, (to whom we appealed, when we entred into Covenant to preserve and defend the Kings Majesties Person, and authority, in the preservation and defence of the true Protestant-Religion, and Liberties of the Kingdom) yea the Lord God himselfe, Angels and Men, may bear witnesse with our Consciences, that we have no thoughts or intentions (nor ever had) to diminish His Majesties just power and greatnesse, and that we the Subscribers hereof are not Covenant-breakers, but do utterly dislike and disavow the present proceedings against him, either to the taking away of His Majesties Crown, much lesse his life, the very thought whereof we from our souls detest and abhor; We do, hereby, most freely faithfully and plainly discharge our consciences, and do testifie our loyaltie unto the Kings Majestie

Majeſtie according to the duty of our allegiance, expreſſed in the foreſaid Proteſtation, *May*, 5th, 1641, and the Solemn League and Covenant. And we do, hereby, further declare, that when we ſo cordially concurred with the Parliament at firſt, in the oppoſition of the Forces raiſed by the King (ſeduced by evill Counſellors) as we propounded the preſervation and defence of our Religion, Parliament, Laws and Liberties: ſo, alſo, to preſerve, and not to ruine the Kings Perſon; but, mainly *to remove the wicked from his throne, that ſo it might be eſtabliſhed in Righteouſneſſe to Him and his royall Poſterity*; But, we ſay not to pluck Him out of it, and to bring him to an Arbitrary-tryall for his life, both in reſpect of his Judges and their Law.

In ſumme, therefore, we have (in all theſe moſt weighty reſpects) too great and juſt cauſe to be extraordinarie ſenſible, that the bringing of the King (the Head of the Common-wealth) to a tryall for his life, before an arbitrary and illegall power, warranted by no Law of God or Man, and the moſt ſtrange, irregular and unparallel'd proceedings, and contemptuous carriages toward His Majeſtie, The puting down of the Houſe of Lords, and, The reſtraining of ſo many eminent Members of Parliament, by the Generall Councell of Officers in Arms, againſt all Laws of God and Man, the known priviledges of Parliament, the liberties of the Subject, and their juſtification of all theſe exorbitances, in print, inſtead of Repentance and deep humiliation for the ſame, is but a ſad prologue to the enſuing ſlavery and ruine of all the free-borne Subjects of this Realm: For, if the Head and moſt eminent Members of the Common wealth, legally to be protected from violence and tyranny, by ſo many Oaths, Covenants priviledges, Laws and Engagements, be thus tyrannically and barbarouſly, already, inſulted over, and trampled under feet, like duſt in the ſtreets, by an imperious Military-power; We, who are inferior to them in all reſpects, and not invironed with ſo many priviledges and protections, cannot but moſt juſtly fear and expect far greater inſolencies and intolerable preſſours to be unmercifully exerciſed on us by them, when theſe pillars and foundations are not onely thus ſhaken, but even quite removed and ſet by: According to our Saviours own words. *Matth* 10. 25. *If they have called the maſter of the houſe* Beelzebub, *how much more will they call them ſo, that are of his houſhold?* In ſad and ſerious conſideration hereof, therefore, we ſay, again and again, we cannot poſſibly keep ſilence, though it be an evill; nay, becauſe it is ſo evill a time: But as profeſſors of the true reformed Proteſtant Religion, which teacheth no ſuch Doctrines, as theſe fore-mentioned, and as are, now adayes ſo unbluſhingly practiſed, in relation to the Kings Majeſty, and to the reſt of his free-borne Subjects, without any reſpect, or leaſt diſtinction to their places or qualities; That we may, as much as in us lyes, wipe off that foul blot and ſcandalous ſtain that will (otherwiſe) inevitably fall upon Religion, by this moſt horrid breach of our Covenant, eſpecially in relation to our King; that profeſſors of the Goſpell in other Kingdoms may not alſo ſuffer by being caſt out of royall protection, for the ſin of ſome (pretended) profeſſors among us; And that we our ſelves (when the approaching Earthquake, which is like to be in the three Kingdoms by fearfull commotions and endles wars, and inevitably

like to attend the intended depoſure, or violent death of our Soveraign King, ſadly falls upon us) may not have our outward misery, and inward guilt to meet together without and within us, even our Conſciences flying in our faces, for our (at leaſt ſeeming) conſent unto it, by our ſinfull ſilence. But what we may in the ſingleneſſe and ſincerity of our hearts) waſh our hands and clear our innocencie in the ſight of God and the whole Chriſtian world: We do not onely, in generall, make this our juſt Apologie that we are far from the approving of the breach of our Covenant in any part or branch of it; But, in particular, in reference to that of the Kings Perſon, ſo clear and innocent that we declare our Deteſtation and Souls abhorrency of that moſt diſloyall action; conceiving it to be ſuch a ſin, as Men muſt create a New Name, for, and God a New Hell or puniſhment for it.

And, thus now, having (in the unfeined ſincerity of our hearts) witneſſed a good Confeſſion, as in the ſight of God, and Men; not from a factious, ſeditious, vain-glorious, or perverſe Spirit of contradiction, or in the leaſt tinctured vile maligntty, or ſpottacie from the common cauſe of Religion, Liberty and peace of the Kingdome; Though we fear not perſecution (our righteouſneſſe ſake in being true to our principles) from thoſe who have power now in their hands: yet, not knowing whether by Gods permiſſive providence, *Satan may not aſk ſome of us to ſift us*, (having ſecured our Conſciences at liberty) We therefore commit our Soules, in this our Well-doing unto God, as unto a faithfull Creator, hyding our ſelves under the ſhadow of his wings, till theſe calamities be over paſt, and looking unto Jeſus, who hath aſſured us, *That whoſoever ſhall forſake houſes or brethren, or ſiſters, or father or mother, or wife or children, or lands for his Names ſake, he ſhall receive an hundredfold, and ſhall inherit everlaſting life.* We have therefore hereunto ſubſcribed our Names with our hearts and hands.

FINIS.